The A. F. of L. Weekly News Service gives news accurate and editorial interpretation of matters affecting labor covering in the industrial, legislative, and political fields, and contains other information of benefit to the trade union movement.

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR

WEEKLY NEWS SERVICE

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WHOLE NO. 1531 — WILLIAM GREEN, President — WASHINGTON, D. C., TUESDAY, AUGUST 13, 1940 — GEORGE MEANY, Secretary-Treasurer — VOL. 30, NO. 33

FACING *the* FACTS

With PHILIP PEARL

An open break between Sidney Hillman and John L. Lewis is imminent. It is obvious now that they are secretly working against each other for control of the CIO. They are each seeking to line up support among CIO affiliates for a showdown fight which will take place at the next CIO convention, if not before.

Their differences are basic and irreconcilable. Organizationally, Lewis wants—as he always has wanted—to destroy the American Federation of Labor and become a one-man dictator over American labor. Hillman, on the other hand, appears to be anxious for labor peace and a reunited labor movement.

Politically, the split between the two CIO leaders is even wider. Lewis hates Roosevelt and is willing to play even the Communist Party's game in a desperate effort to beat the President. Hillman adores Roosevelt and he wants to commit the entire CIO organization to support the New Deal.

Philosophically, they no longer see eye to eye. Lewis, always contemptuous of the democratic process, admires and wishes to emulate the inhuman efficiency of dictatorship. Events in Europe have not been lost on Lewis. They have inspired him to pull a blitzkrieg of his own here. Hillman, however, is overcome with revulsion against the methods and practices of his former ideal, Soviet Russia, as well as those of Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy.

Who Will Be Purged?

But more than all of this, the feud between the two men has now become implacable because Hillman refuses to take orders from Lewis and is pursuing a completely independent course. No one can do that and remain on good terms with Lewis. Throughout his career he has demanded complete subservience from all his followers. He has kicked out life-long friends for a mere, momentary deviation from his personal policies. He is now trying to kick out Hillman.

But Hillman is evidently not going to submit quietly to a purge. If Lewis ousts him, Hillman is determined to take other CIO unions with him.

Thus a bitter war is now smoldering within the ranks of the CIO leadership. It dared into public notice a few days ago over an incident in connection with the defense program.

In his capacity as labor coordinator for the National Defense Advisory Commission, Hillman appointed a labor advisory committee of sixteen members to consult with him and to help keep labor disputes from retarding the defense program. On this committee were seven representatives from AFL unions, seven from CIO unions and two from independent railroad brotherhoods.

Characteristically, Lewis was not satisfied with this arrangement which was more than fair to the CIO because the CIO has one member to every four of the American Federation of Labor.

So when James J. Matles, organization director of the CIO United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers, squawked over Hillman's failure to appoint a representative of his union to the committee, Lewis quickly sought to make political capital out of the complaint within the CIO organization.

Matles first expressed indignation because Hillman had conferred "signed with Red." This Hillman denied. But the question of veracity is immaterial because the fact is that the union is more than tinged that way. Then, Matles resented a hint from Hillman that the union ought to "square itself politically." That, also, Hillman denies.

Knifing Each Other

But Lewis realized this was fine ammunition. So he quickly dispatched a letter to Hillman protesting against these charges of "practically disloyalty and political non-conformity" of a CIO union. Such a thing, of course, would be impossible. But the letter to Hillman was just a formality. The real purpose in writing it was quickly revealed. Lewis released a copy of the Matles letter and his own to every member of the CIO executive board.

What was the significance of this action? The intention, of course, was to accuse Hillman of disloyalty to the CIO. Lewis thought he could get the CIO brothers and sisters sore at Hillman. The latter, however, was not caught napping. He replied to Lewis, sharply rejecting the protests and he also sent his letter to each member of the CIO executive board. Hillman's purpose also was obvious. He was trying to get Lewis in wrong.

This sort of surreptitious knifing has been going on for some time and before long some one is going to get hurt.

At the last CIO convention, Hillman dared to object to Lewis' refusal to continue peace negotiations with the AFL and he also complained about Communist influence in CIO the circles. Lewis then closed the doors of the CIO executive board meeting. Lewis got so angry he threatened to resign as CIO President and that gesture promptly quashed all opposition.

This year, we predict that if Lewis tries the same dodge his resignation will be gratefully accepted.

Profits Nearing Peaks, Wages Lag, A. F. of L. Business Survey Warns

Washington, D. C.—A 23 per cent increase in industrial profits during 1940, due partly to the Nation's defense program, was forecast by the American Federation of Labor in its Monthly Survey of Business.

The Federation placed prospective profits of 400 leading industrial corporations at $2,280,000,000, which approaches the prosperity peak of 1927-29 and the recovery peak of 1937. These corporations, it was said, reported profits during the first six months of 1940 were up 50 per cent over the same period last year.

During this period, the Federation said, dividend payments were up 15 per cent while earners' income rose only 4.9 per cent.

"Corporations have not increased wages as much as their earnings permitted," the survey said. "The workflow of income to workers is vital. We need the flow of their buying power into non-defense consumer goods industries to keep these industries growing in a normal way, prevent high-pressure inflation and build up our national well-being."

The survey said shipments of war materials have more than offset losses from markets closed to American products by the war. It reported the cost of living in June was up nearly 2 per cent from that in June 1939, but said no serious increases are expected in the near future.

A national income of $75,000,000,000, a increase of $5,000,000,000 over 1939, was forecast.

The Federation said this country is rapidly swinging into a defense economy and warned unless the preparedness program is carefully guided the result can disrupt our economic life, causing booms in some industries and recessions in others, destroy labor standards, leave mills and men stranded after the first years of intense activity are over."

Rise In Labor Productivity Shows Longer Hours Needless For Defense

Washington, D. C.—Propaganda spread by reactionary employers that hours of labor must be lengthened for the sake of national defense, was blasted in a new government report.

Prepared jointly by the Department of Labor and Department of Commerce, the report showed that workers' efficiency has vastly increased since the last World War, and that defense industries are getting a far greater production per man-hour from their employees than they did 20 years ago.

As a result, labor costs have dropped in all major industries, the government survey revealed. This has been especially true in the plants turning out important defense orders, the report declared.

For example, in petroleum refining, labor costs per unit of output have declined by 67 per cent since 1919; in chemical factories, by 56 per cent; in blast furnaces, steel works and rolling mills, 39 per cent, and in metal smelters, 30 per cent.

Because labor's productivity has gone up so sharply, there is not the slightest call for increasing the hours of work, under the guise of national defense, union spokesmen contended.

The rise in labor's efficiency has been particularly impressive in the past four years, the government study revealed. In blast furnaces, steel works and rolling mills, the output per man-hour grew by 27.5 per cent; in petroleum refining, 25 per cent; in rayon, 58 per cent, and in cement, 32 per cent.

In virtually all cases payrolls have lagged behind production, and wages would have to be increased considerably to catch up with advances that very indicated further.

A special study of the cement industry brought to light unusually great increases in labor productivity. The investigators found that from 1904 to 1919 the amount of cement turned out per wage earner climbed by 37 per cent, and from 1919 to 1938, it jumped again by more than 100 per cent.

Hillman Spurns Lewis and Refuses To Name CIO Man to Defense Board

Washington, D. C.—Sidney Hillman sharply rebuffed his chief, John L. Lewis, over the issue of appointments to the Labor Policy Advisory Committee to the National Defense Advisory Commission, according to an exchange of letters made public by the New York Times.

The significant incident arose when James J. Matles, organization director of the CIO United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers of America, protested to Lewis against the fact that this union had been excluded from representation on the committee.

Matles wrote Lewis that the 22 that Hillman had turned down his demands for representation because the U. E. R. M. W. was "tinged with Red" and had not "squared itself politically." He urged that Assistant Secretary of Labor Dan W. Tracy, former President of the AFL International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, be removed from the committee to make way for an officer of the C.I.O. union.

Lewis promptly transmitted Matles' letter to Hillman and backed up his demand. He also sent copies of the Matles letter and his own to every member of the C.I.O. executive board.

"It is most disturbing," Lewis wrote, "to read some of the statements in the letter with respect to your charges of practical disloyalty and political non-conformity. I sincerely hope that the administration of the defense program will not be influenced by such considerations."

Hillman flatly turned down Lewis' request for reconsideration of his decision not to appoint a representative of the U.E.R.M.W. to the committee. He wrote:

"The factors which determined selections were the degree of contribution to the program of national defense and assistance to this office in the performance of its duties. You may be assured that the foregoing were the sole criteria—and not others —upon which selections were made. Any suggestion, direct or indirect, to the contrary is clearly at variance with the facts."

Hillman, who is labor coordinator for the Defense Commission, also denied he had accused the C.I.O. union with being "Red."

The New York Times story said this dispute provided a new source of friction between Mr. Lewis and Mr. Hillman." The latter also sent his letter to every member of the C.I.O. executive board.

Arsenals Add 24,000 to Work Force; Change to 3 Shifts and 6-Day Week

Washington, D. C.—Six Government arsenals are placed on a 24-hour production basis as huge new British orders were offered to American army plants, already under way to start on the biggest defense program since World War days.

The new orders will involve operation of the arsenals six days, a week, with three shifts a day, and will call for the employment of 8,000 additional skilled mechanics and somewhat over 16,000 semi-skilled and unskilled workers.

Pay of the workers will be at the rate of time and a half for time beyond forty hours.

The order, issued by Secretary of War Stimson with the approval of President Roosevelt, will speed employment and increase payrolls through the country from the most westerly of the six arsenals at Rock Island, Ill., to the Atlantic Coast.

Besides the Rock Island arsenal, which now has 5,500 employes, the arsenals affected and the number of their present employes are: Watertown, Mass., 2,200; Frankford Arsenal, Philadelphia, 4,700; Springfield, Mass., 3,200; Picatinny Arsenal, Dover, N. J., 3,800; Watervliet, N. Y., 1,800.

Meanwhile the Navy Yard in Washington, D. C., pushed the age limit for precision lens, prism and test plate makers up to those who have not passed their 62d birthday. Originally the age limits for this type of work were 20-45; the next step was 50, and now the new limitation has been fixed. In addition, applications will be received from those who have had only two years of training instead of the four generally required.

The Federal Civil Service Commissioner at Chicago, Ill., announced that the age limit for machinists and tool makers at Rock Island Arsenal has been raised from 55 to 62 years. The minimum age remains 18 years.

Defense Program Without Strikes Predicted by Secretary Perkins

Boston, Mass.—Secretary of Labor Frances Perkins scoffed at the possibility of strike-disruption of this country's defense program in an address before the fifty-fifth annual convention of the Massachusetts Federation of Labor.

She told the delegates that "the rights and liberties of labor carry certain duties and obligations to promote the welfare of others" and that the new crisis in the life of the nation—an emergency that individual rights must be secondary to the welfare of the entire nation.

Commending the cooperation between labor and industry on national defense, Miss Perkins predicted that strikes would not hamper the program as they did in 1917, because "labor now has the rights for which it struck then—recognition and decent working conditions."

At the same time, she declared there will be no shortage of skilled labor, with the exception of copper-smiths for work on warships, and expressed doubt that a long strike would speed up defense on the grounds that experience in the last war has shown it was possible to make more goods, more quickly with a shorter work week.

Robert J. Watt, international representative of the American Federation of Labor, told the convention that "negotiation must be the process rather than strike if labor wants to gain the effectiveness and public confidence which are especially essential in the defense program.

"Many a legitimate strike," he said, "will have to be avoided by the self-discipline of labor unions if we are to curb the efforts of our domestic enemies."

Mr. Watt called for creation of a "fierce spirit of democracy in America which will break to assaults from without and which will tolerate no termites from within."

He said that the Sherman anti-trust law was "one piece of legislation which may have to be altered to coordinate defense programs, but organized workers would not weep if this pernicious boomerang piece of legislation were straightened out."

U. S. COURT ENDS TWO COMPANY UNIONS

St. Louis, Mo.—Two decisions of the United States Circuit Court of Appeals have resulted in the ending of the provisions of the National Labor Relations Act proscribing company unions or efforts to prevent employers from interfering with the right of their employes to organize in unions of their own choosing.

The Christian Board of Publication was ordered to disestablish an "Employes Committee" after the evidence revealed that a poll of the employes prior to the organization of the Employes Committee showed a majority in favor of unions affiliated with the Allied Printing Trades Council as their bargaining agency.

In the second case the court upheld charges that the Skinner Manufacturing Stationery Company had dominated and interfered with a labor organization of its employes known as the "Grasshopper Welfare Association," and had discharged two employes because of their union activities. The charges were made by unions affiliated with the St. Louis Allied Printing Trades Council.

NLRB THREATENS UNION IDLE REPORTED PLACED IN JOBS IN YEAR

Washington, D. C.—The Federal Reserve Board estimated that about 1,000,000 persons were taken from the unemployed army last year, but the net decrease in the jobless, the board said, was only "around half a million" because of the growth of population.

CIO RUBBER UNION SWIPED LOCAL FUNDS, IS CHARGE

Akron, Ohio.—Goodyear Local No. 2, C.I.O., Rubber Workers of America, has taken action against the International union by filing a $8,-028.26 strike fund which it claimed was confiscated by the International. This sum, called the "Savings Bank Strike Fund" was donated to the strikers by local unions, central labor unions and national unions in and outside of Akron.

Members of C.I.O. Local No. 2, headed by a "Square Deal Committee," distributed copies of the bank statement showing the amount remaining after minor expenditures had been deducted. The committee charged that while members of the local were on the picket line the international union was "taking the money that was donated to us—money that would have fed our families. The United Rubber Workers of America is the only union in the history of the labor movement that confiscates strikers' money to pay their constitutional obligations."

TWO N. Y. FIRMS SIGN RESTAURANT UNION PACT

New York, N. Y.—The Stork Club and Schrafft's restaurants signed agreements with the Hotel and Restaurant Employes International Alliance after losing long court fights. Both concerns agreed to obey the orders of the State Labor Relations Board requiring reinstatement with back pay of workers discharged for union activities.

News Briefs

HIGHER WAGE RATES ASKED BY N. Y. TEAMSTERS UNION

New York, N. Y.—Local 807 of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters is seeking an increase of 88 cents per day plus 30 cents more per hour overtime in a proposed new wage scale agreement offered to supercede the current pact with the Merchant Truckmen's Bureau. The new rate is $9.00 per day against the present rate of $8.72, and $1.80 per hour for overtime against the present $1.50. In addition, the union is demanding one week's vacation with pay and a reduction in working hours from 44 to 40 a week with no cut in wages.

Secretary-Treasurer Thomas L. Hickey of the union said warehouses, dock and terminal businesses had adopted the five-day week, so that there was little hauling for trucks to do on Saturdays.

BIRMINGHAM STREETCAR STRIKERS WIN PAY RISE

Birmingham, Ala.—A two-day strike of colored maintenance men which tied up streetcar and bus service was ended when representatives of the Amalgamated Association of Street and Electric Railway and Motor Coach Employes of America signed an agreement with officials of the Birmingham Electric Company providing a ten cents per hour increase for 106 Negro employes of the company's maintenance department and giving the Amalgamated members seniority rights. Union bus and streetcar operators refused to pass through picket lines of the striking colored maintenance workers.

NEW YORK BOARD PREVENTS 428 STRIKES IN 3 YEARS

Albany, N. Y.—From July 1, 1937, when the State Labor Relations Act became effective, to July 31, 1940, the New York State Labor Relations Board received 6,040 labor cases, disposed of 5,612 of the total cases and averted 428 strikes involving 49,160 employes, the board said. Most of the cases were disposed of without formal hearings. Unions affiliated with the American Federation of Labor brought 3,816 cases to the board.

COMMUNIST CANDIDATE GETS FIFTEEN-YEAR PRISON TERM

Beckley, W. Va.—Criminal Court Judge Harley M. Kilgore sentenced Oscar O. Wheeler, Communist candidate for Governor of West Virginia, to a prison term of 5 to 15 years for fraudulent solicitation of names to a nominating petition seeking to place Communist candidates on the November ballot in the State election. Wheeler received a one to 10 year sentence on the principal charge and 5 years additional for a second-offense conviction.

JOB PROTECTION APPROVED IN TRANSPORTATION BILL

Washington, D. C.—The House and Senate transportation bill approved by the Senate and House conferees which includes an amendment intended to preserve the jobs of employes affected by railroad mergers.

Chairman Lea of the House Interstate Commerce Committee said that under the amendment an employe who had worked for a railroad for twenty years would be given a salary for four more after his job was abolished.

AFL OFFICIAL RENAMED D. C. JOB BOARD MEMBER

Washington, D. C.—John Locher, a vice president of the AFL Plumbers, was reappointed employe representative of the District Unemployment Compensation Board by the District Commissioners. He will serve a three-year term beginning August 15. Chairman Chairman Jennings Randolph of the House District Committee introduced a bill to amend the District unemployment compensation law by including employes of national banks as beneficiaries.

JUDGE CITES WAGE CLAIM DEFENDANTS FOR CONTEMPT

Washington, D. C.—Municipal Court Judge Armond W. Scott issued contempt citations against several District of Columbia Small Claims Court defendants owing wage claim judgments. Pointing out that the small claims law establishes preference for wage claims, the judge said judgments in such claims are payable at once, but that numerous wage claimants had complained that their employers were "stalling."

WAGE RAISES FOR 2,000

Newark, N. J.—Two thousand children's dressmakers here won a 21 wage increase in an agreement negotiated by the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union and the New Jersey Washable Dress Contractors Association.

Fifteen AFL Unions and TVA Sign History-Making Labor Agreement

DUBINSKY URGES U. S. STYLE CENTER

I. L. G. W. U. Chief Says American Fashions Would Help American Workers.

New York.—David Dubinsky, president of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union, hailed the group movement to make this country the fashion center of the world.

Dubinsky declared the creation of American styles would greatly aid in bringing jobs back to the unemployed in the dressmaking industry. He pointed out if the industry shrank from lack of styles, employment also would decay.

Dubinsky declared his union stood ready to throw its whole hearted support to studios started to experiment with the creation of original American models and accessories, whether they are sponsored by individuals or groups of designers, fabric interests, or others. The only proviso he laid down was that none of the ateliers established should be used for "chiseling" on labor.

On the other hand, if it were found necessary to change some of the rules of production in order to help the movement along, the union would cooperate to the fullest extent, Dubinsky pledged. The ladies' garment workers organization, with its broad educational and cultural program, is one of the most forward-looking unions in the country.

"There is a real need for filling the gap resulting in the collapse of Paris and its domination by the Nazis," continued Dubinsky. "The women's garment industry depends on styles and women need constant changes.

"We have all the equipment, facilities, talent and brains for the creation of styles here in America. We must take the initiative as we have in other fields. This country can show the world its own lead not only in mass production but also in dividuality.

"This move will help the industry and help our workers. If the industry shrinks because of a shortage of styles, employment naturally dwindles. We must adopt our own native American styles to replace the losses in Paris."

3 BILLION DISTRIBUTED UNDER SOCIAL SECURITY

Washington, D. C.—The Federal Government's old-age security program, which celebrated its fifth anniversary last week, has distributed $3,000,000,000 in old-age and unemployed benefits, and to widows, orphans and the blind of the United States.

The large scope of protection given by the program is revealed in a statement by the Social Security Board that approximately 50,000,000 had been enrolled in the program since President Roosevelt signed the act in 1935.

The benefits of the social security program are distributed through half a dozen outlets which are either exclusively Federal enterprises or joint undertakings of Nation and State.

Its "insurance" benefits for the aged and unemployed are financed by pay roll taxes, while direct grants from Federal and State treasuries sustain the public assistance features for the young, the old and the helpless in need.

At the top of the program is the old-age and survivors' insurance system, which pays out monthly benefits after workers retire at 65, and to their wives, widows and orphans. Up to this time $1,500,000,000 has been paid $$3,000,000,000 to 192,941 persons.

Unemployment compensation, which gives insured workers a modicum of weekly sum during a limited number of weeks, has distributed or is required to have distributed more than $1,000,000,000 in out-of-work benefits.

Of the more than 28,000,000 commercial and industrial workers covered by the insurance, about 1,500,000 monthly claims are drawn for unemployment compensation.

The funds for the insured idle, the social security system has taken over the Employment Service. It has been staffed with filling 5,000,000 jobs during 1939 and the first six months of 1940.

The public assistance phases of the program, distinct from the old-age and jobless insurance system, are operated through joint Federal-State machinery to provide, on a basis of need, financial care for the aged unable to qualify for insurance benefits, for the needy blind, and for dependent children.

The public assistance operation, officials reported, aids some 3,000,000 persons every month, among them 1,983,900 aged, 897,900 children and 48,000 blind. The expenditure for this part of the system has totaled about $1,900,000,000.

DWELLINGS AT LOW RENT OPENED IN NEW YORK CITY

New York, N. Y.—Three hundred families in the low-income groups moved into the first four completed buildings of Vladeck Houses, a Federal housing project on the East Side. The entire project will house 1,531 families. It covers six city blocks. Ninety per cent of the cost was furnished by the United States Housing Authority in the form of a loan.

Unions Given Equal Voice With Management on Labor Issues.

Washington, D. C.—Fifteen American Federation of Labor unions and the Tennessee Valley Authority signed a history-making agreement covering 8,000 building and metal trades workers engaged on the giant power project.

This far-reaching contract gives union representatives a direct and equal voice with management in fixing labor standards, determining wage rates, promoting safety and health, training apprentices and improving efficiency and economy in operations.

Thus the fundamental philosophy of the American Federation of Labor collective for a friendly, cooperative partnership between labor and management is written into this highly significant pact with a Government agency.

Thousands of additional workers will be covered by the agreement when the proposed $25,000,000 expansion of T. V. A. facilities for national defense purposes gets under way.

David E. Lilienthal, T. V. A. director, said:

"I consider this agreement more valuable than any of our dams. It charts the way to labor-management cooperation in the national defense program. It is worth millions to the people of this country."

Marion Hedges, research director for the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, who served as technical adviser to the T. V. A. unions was similarly enthusiastic.

"It is the finest contract ever entered into with any branch of the Government," he said. "It sets a high standard that both private employers and other agencies of the Government would do well to follow."

John P. Frey, president of the Metal Trades Department, joined in praising the agreement.

"A basic principle has been worked out within the T. V. A." he declared, "which makes a valuable contribution to employer and employe relations, especially when the employer is a Federal authority."

Under the contract, joint machinery is set up through which labor has equal authority with supervisory officials over problems affecting both workers and management.

Preference in hiring is given to A. F. of L. union men. Methods are provided for handling of jurisdictional disputes without any cessation of work, and for quick disposition of employe grievances and other disputes.

Negotiations leading to the contract took nearly a year. It was made possible by a joint statement by President Sam E. Roper of the Tennessee Valley Trades and Labor Council and Arthur E. Sandrey, T. V. A. director of personnel.

Supplementary to the agreement, the unions, through their council, adopted a resolution pledging all efforts to keep production for the national defense power project at the highest possible level. The unions also promised to keep out any subversive elements that might arise.

T. V. A.'s labor policy has drawn high praise from many sources. The most comprehensive analysis of the policy was made recently by Judson King, director of the National Popular Government League, and published in pamphlet form.

The T. V. A. experiment," King said, "gave its board and its employes an opportunity to set up a new kind of relations for labor relations; one in which the old master-servant, dog-eat-dog, strike-and-lockout philosophy would be abolished."

All foremen and superintendents were coached in administering the policies. Every worker's rights are fully treated. Those who failed to go along were disciplined or dismissed, King pointed out.

The result has been, he added, that not only has labor won superb working conditions, but efficiency has been high and construction costs low. King suggested that the T. V. A. idea be followed by all publicly-owned utilities in the nation.

WAGE-BOOST STRIKE WON BY DETROIT TEAMSTERS

Detroit, Mich.—Local 299 of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters won a 19 cent hourly wage increase for 1,800 truckers and yardmen in the settlement of a 19-day strike. The settlement covering all firms concerned granted a seven and one-half cent raise immediately and two and one-half cents next January 1, bringing the wage then up to 80 cents an hour.

HOTEL UNION HEAD HITS ANTI-PICKET ORDINANCE

Monticello, N. Y.—Herbert Lerner, chairman of Local 747, Hotel and Restaurant Workers Union, which is organizing hotel workers in the Catskill Mountain resort section, challenged in a telegram to Gov. Lehman the legality and constitutionality of an anti-picketing ordinance recently passed by the Cochecton Town Board barring picketing as an obstruction to traffic and asked that police be ordered not to enforce the ordinance.